

Message Text

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64

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SCCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /089 W

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R 031655Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4218

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USUN NEW YORK 918

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0839

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: SMITH INTERVIEW

1. IN INTERVIEW APPEARING IN SALISBURY SUNDAY MAIL DEC 1, RHODESIAN PRIME MINISTER IAN SMITH DISCUSSED DETENTE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, POSSIBLE TALKS WITH DETAINED AFRICAN LEADERS, SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATIONS, AND RHODESIAN SECURITY SITUATION. INTERVIEW WAS FIRST WITH RHODESIAN JOURNALIST SINCE HINTS OF DETENTE INVOLVING PRIME MINISTER VORSTER AND PRESIDENT KAUNDA.

2. SMITH SAID HE WOULD "MAKE SURE RHODESIA PLAYS ITS PART AS EFFECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE" IN "TREMENDOUS CHANGE OF THINKING UNCLASSIFIED

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IN SOUTHERN AFRICA." HE SAID THAT CONTINUATION OF "TERRORISM"

DOES NOT INFLUENCE RHODESIA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD DETENTE.

3. REGARDING TALKS WITH DETAINED AFRICAN LEADERS, SMITH SAID HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO TALK WITH THEM IF HE WAS SATISFIED THAT THEY WERE READY TO WORK CONSTITUTIONALLY AND TO DENOUNCE TERRORISM." HE POINTED OUT THAT HE PREVIOUSLY FOLLOWED THIS COURSE WITH AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL, BUT WAS NOT YET AWARE OF SUCH CHANGE OF MIND BY DETAINED LEADERS.

4. SMITH IMPLIED THAT SOME NEGOTIATIONS (HE DID NOT STATE WITH WHOM) WERE NOW BEING CONDUCTED. HE WAS NON-COMMITTAL AS TO LENGTH OF TIME BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BEAR FRUIT. HE SAID, " I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG THE DURATION WILL BE. IT MIGHT BE TWO MONTHS. IT MIGHT BE SIX MONTHS." HE DESCRIBED SITUATION AS "DELICATE" AND ONE WHICH MUST BE TREATED WITH GREAT RESERVE.

5. SECURITY SITUATION WAS DESCRIBED AS "IMPROVING" AND NEW "TECHNIQUES" WERE EFFECTIVELY BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE. SMITH SAID STRENGTH IN SECURITY SITUATION WAS REAL ASPECT IN SUPPORTING HIS POSITION IN ANY TALKS. ASSURED RHODESIAN PUBLIC THAT GOVERNMENT "NOT PREPARED TO DEPART FROM BASIC PRINCIPLES."

6. COMMENT: PARTICIPATION OF DETAINED LEADERS HAS BEEN AN CONDITION FOR TALKS WITH GOVERNMENT. SMITH'S INTERVIEW OF PARTICULAR NOTE, GIVEN SPECULATION WHICH HAS BLOSSOMED IN RECENT DAYS ABOUT POSSIBLE TEMPORARY RELEASE FROM PRISON OF LEADING BLACK OPPONENTS OF SMITH REGIME AND THEIR ALLEGED CONSULTATION WITH GUERRILLA GROUPS AND LEADERS OF BLACK AFRICA (SEE REFTTEL).

7. FULL TEXT OF INTERVIEW BEING POUCHED TO AF/S.
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